

**Quality Educational Programs, Inc.**

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# **The Classroom of Choice: Managing the Learning Environment**

**A Distance Learning Graduate Course**

**Course Syllabus**

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Whether you are a teacher, a coach, or in any position in which you work with young people, you are first and foremost a manager . . . Teachers manage the learning space, time, materials, and the mental, physical, and emotional states of individuals, partners, small groups, and large groups. Effective teachers must be effective managers.

Jonathan C. Erwin  
*The Classroom of Choice:  
Giving Students What They Need  
and Getting What You Want*

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## Acknowledgements

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through the cooperation and contributions of

Jonathan C. Erwin

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Diane Vance, Project Director  
Smart Character Choices

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## Rationale

Today, we know more about teaching than we ever have before. Research has shown us that teachers' actions in their classrooms have twice the impact on student achievement as do school policies regarding curriculum, assessment, staff collegiality, and community involvement. We also know that one of the classroom teacher's most important jobs is managing the classroom effectively.

Robert J. Marzano and Jana S. Marzano  
“The Key to Classroom Management”  
*Educational Leadership*

One of a manager's most important concerns is the motivation of workers, or for our purposes, students. Unmotivated students do poor work or no work, learn very little, and often behave in irresponsible or disruptive ways. Motivated students do quality work, learn well, and behave responsibly. There are two approaches to motivating students. One appeals to external motivation, which relies heavily on incentives or rewards (positive reinforcement) and consequences or punishment (negative reinforcement). The other approach appeals to internal motivation, which depends on motivation to come from needs or drives within students.

### The Problems with External Motivation

External motivation is the most prevalent type of motivation used not only in classrooms, but also in the world at large. Think of the ways people try to make other people do what they want them to do. Whether it is a teacher trying to persuade a student to work, a parent trying to get a child to get ready for school, a wife trying to talk her spouse into doing a household chore, a boss trying to get his employees to work harder, or one nation trying to force another nation to change a policy or ideology . . . One of the problems with these strategies is that none is guaranteed to work. If a student or anyone else has the mindset to not comply, there is nothing you can do to make him, except possibly using physical force. Unless safety is the issue, that strategy is illegal in most schools. Besides, the behavior we are most interested in is learning, and you can't physically force anyone to learn.

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## Minimizing Fear and Coercion

The essential question, then, is: How do we manage students' learning and behavior while minimizing coercion? Does that mean we adopt a laissez-faire, anything-goes teaching style? Not at all. The ideas in this book come from direct experience, not just from theory or clinical research. I know firsthand how students respond to a lack of structure, and it isn't pretty. What I am suggesting is that first we do all we can to appeal to what intrinsically motivates students. If that doesn't work, we can always return to the strategies we've used in the past. However, I am convinced that once you have experienced a class full of intrinsically motivated students, you will not want to go back. Choice Theory has worked for thousands of teachers throughout the world.

Jonathan C. Erwin  
*The Classroom of Choice:  
Giving Students What They Need  
and Getting What You Want*

### **Video Instructor Jonathan C. Erwin**

In his 11 years as a middle and senior high school teacher, Jon Erwin taught English and a variety of electives to students in grades 7-12, coached track and cross country, and directed several plays and musicals. From 1996 to 2003, Jon was a staff development and curriculum specialist with the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) serving a three-county region around Elmira, New York. He has been a faculty member of the William Glasser Institute since 1995, is an adjunct faculty member of Elmira College, and is a part-time professor at Lock Haven University. Jon is also the founder and director of The Choice Players, a group of students, ages 12-19, who learn Choice Theory and teach it to others at local and national conferences and workshops. Jon is the author of *The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What You Want* (ASCD, 2004) and of the soon to be published *Inspiring the Best in Students: Improving Academics and Character Through Social-Emotional Learning* (ASCD, 2010). Jon now works as an independent educational consultant based in western New York.

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## **Course Title**

“The Classroom of Choice:  
Managing the Learning Environment”

## **Course Description**

"The Classroom of Choice: Managing the Learning Environment" is a three semester hour graduate course designed for K-12 teachers. In this course, participants will develop and demonstrate an understanding of classroom management that is based on an application of Dr. William Glasser's Choice Theory and Quality Schools concepts and practices. Participants will engage in activities through which they will learn, plan to use, and implement non-coercive classroom management strategies designed to produce a positive and productive classroom learning environment.

## **Course Goals**

On completion of this course, participants will have an understanding of an internal control-based approach to classroom management and will be able to develop and implement classroom strategies to create an environment that promotes responsible behavior and quality learning.

## **Course Outline**

In the following outline, the term "Course of Study" refers to a study plan that includes required reading, video viewing, worksheets, application assignments and progress reports.

### **Session #1: The Classroom of Choice: An Introduction**

**Objectives:** To have participants understand the scope and sequence of this course, to expose them to key concepts, to have them preview course videos and lessons, and to have them set a course goal.

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Assignments and Activities: Required reading assignments in course text and course of study book, viewing the video for this session, completing learning activities, and set of a learning goal for the course.

Session #2: The Classroom of Choice: Laying the Foundation

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of the role trust plays in creating a positive classroom learning environment; to have participants learn classroom activities that develop trusting relationships; create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

Session #3: The Classroom of Choice: Motivation and Needs

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of the role Dr. Glasser's Choice Theory can play in effective classroom management; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

Session #4: The Classroom of Choice: A Need-Satisfying Environment

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how to use classroom activities that satisfy students basic psychological needs; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary read-

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ing and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

Session #5: The Classroom of Choice: Using Internal Profiles

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of internal needs profiles and how they can be used in classroom management; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

Session #6: The Classroom of Choice: Need-Fulfilling Activities

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how to use a Graffiti Activity to help students understand choice theory principles; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

Session #7: The Classroom of Choice: The Motivation Continuum

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how students can move through various stages of motivation from the withdrawn and sullen through the compliant and dutiful to the enthused and inspired; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation



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of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

#### Session #8: The Classroom of Choice: Teaching Strategies

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how to modify instructional strategies to meet students' basic needs; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course text and readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

#### Session #9: The Classroom of Choice: Problem Solving Class Meetings

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how to use class meetings to solve classroom management problems; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

#### Session #10: The Classroom of Choice: Responsible Choices

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of ways to teach students choice theory with strategies such as direct instruction, peer teaching, and poster activities; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

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## Session #11: The Classroom of Choice: Need-Fulfilling Instruction

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of ways to make instruction need-fulfilling including a Sense-Imagery activity to improve comprehension and retention; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

## Session #12: The Classroom of Choice: The Class Constitution

Objectives: To have participants demonstrate an understanding of how to use a classroom constitution to involve students in the classroom management process; to have participants create, implement, and evaluate a lesson or unit based either on the techniques demonstrated in the video or strategies suggested in the course readings.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, assigned video viewing, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

## Session #13: The Classroom of Choice: Applying Strategies

Objectives: To have participants review the material presented in the course text and to select one technique and design a lesson or activity based on it; to have participants implement their lesson or activity and evaluate its effectiveness.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the creation, implementation, and evaluation of a lesson or unit based on the content presented in this session.

## Session #14: The Classroom of Choice: Self-Select Study

Objectives: To have participants select a video from one of the pre-

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vious lessons to view again and to develop another lesson based on its content; or, to select a topic of their choosing for further research.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in course text, viewing of video, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and creation and evaluation of a lesson or unit.

#### Session #15: The Classroom of Choice: Reflection, Synthesis, and Planning

Objectives: To have participants reflect on their course experience and on insights gained in the course; to have participants identify those course concepts that most apply to their teaching situations; to have participants develop a plan for the future use of the knowledge and skills gained in this course.

Assignments and Activities: Required reading in text and course of study, course of study supplementary reading and activities, and the completion reflection, synthesis, and planning assignment.

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## Participant Characteristics

This course is designed for teachers and administrators in grades kindergarten through twelve. Participants will have a bachelor's degree and a valid teacher credential (if applicable). There are no other prerequisites.

## Instructional Materials

Instructional materials for this course include:

a.) Text: Erwin, J.C. (2004) *The Classroom of Choice: Giving Students What They Need and Getting What You Want*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. (ISBN 13: 978-0-87120-829-3)

b.) Course Media (All videos produced in 2010):

- Video #1: The Classroom of Choice: An Introduction
- Video #2: The Classroom of Choice: Management and Trust
- Video #3: The Classroom of Choice: Motivation and Choice Theory
- Video #4: The Classroom of Choice: A Need-Satisfying Environment
- Video #5: The Classroom of Choice: Using Internal Profiles
- Video #6: The Classroom of Choice: Need-Fulfilling Activities
- Video #7: The Classroom of Choice: The Motivation Continuum
- Video #8: The Classroom of Choice: Need-Fulfilling Teaching Strategies
- Video #9: The Classroom of Choice: Problem Solving Class Meetings
- Video #10: The Classroom of Choice: Teaching Choice Theory to Students
- Video #11: The Classroom of Choice: Need-Fulfilling Instruction
- Video #12: The Classroom of Choice: The Class Constitution

c.) Course of Study.

This book contains articles, summaries of course content, pre-video viewing activities, discussion questions, group activities, individual activities, worksheets, classroom application assignments, and learning reports.

d.) Bibliography.

e.) Internet Resources

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## Learning Activities

1. For each of the fifteen (15) sections of this course, participants will complete the following activities:

- a.) Read the assigned reading in the course of study.
- b.) Participate in a study/preparation activity with a colleague.  
NOTE: While benefits are greatest when participants take this course as a part of a study team, participants can successfully complete course requirements by working with a friend or colleague who is not enrolled in the course; or, by reflecting upon the material and considering how they might use it in their teaching situations.
- c.) View instructional videos.
- d.) Discuss (see above note) course material in terms of participants' own students.
- e.) Record summary of discussion activities in progress report
- f.) Design, implement, and evaluate an application of course content in their teaching situation.  
NOTE: If participants are taking this course during the summer or at a time when they do not have access to a classroom, they follow these directions with respect to classroom application projects.
  1. If they choose to design a classroom lesson or activity for their project, they design it for a class that they have had in the past.
  2. Instead of implementing their activity in a classroom, they share their activity design with a colleague and ask for their input.
  3. Based on the input received from their colleagues, they make whatever changes they feel are appropriate to improve their activity design.
- g.) Summarize classroom application design, application experience, and evaluation in progress report.

2. Submit a final paper.

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## Course Outcomes

As a result of their work in this course, participants will be able to:

- 1.) Demonstrate proficiency in the use of classroom management strategies to create a positive learning environment.
- 2.) Demonstrate proficiency in the use of classroom management strategies to promote responsible student behavior.
- 3.) Demonstrate proficiency in evaluating other teachers' use of classroom management strategies.
- 4.) Develop, implement, and evaluate various classroom management strategies to support course content.
- 5.) Develop a systematic plan to achieve a classroom management goal set at the beginning of the course.
- 6.) Evaluate the effectiveness of their systematic plan.
- 7.) Reflect upon their course experience and plan for the future use of knowledge and skills gained in this course.

## Progress Reporting and Assessment

Participant achievement will be measured by a combination of the following:

A. An evaluation of participant's 15 progress reports. (Outcomes 1, 2, 3, and 4.)

- Each progress report will be evaluated for:
- completeness and quality of responses.
  - accuracy of information.
  - appropriateness of classroom application.
  - quality of reflection.

B. An evaluation of participant's professional paper. (Outcomes 5, 6, and 7.)

- The professional paper will be evaluated for:
- inclusion of required components.
  - synthesis and analysis of course concepts.
  - presentation in an organized, professional manner.

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## Internet Resources

Classroom Management: Elementary Resources

[http://www.internet4classrooms.com/links\\_grades\\_kindergarten\\_12/elementary\\_classroom\\_management.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/links_grades_kindergarten_12/elementary_classroom_management.htm)

This site has multiple links to websites with classroom management information on a variety of topics of interest to elementary school teachers.

Classroom Management: Middle-Secondary Resources

[http://www.internet4classrooms.com/links\\_grades\\_kindergarten\\_12/middle\\_school\\_classroom\\_management.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/links_grades_kindergarten_12/middle_school_classroom_management.htm)

This site has multiple links to websites with classroom management information on a variety of topics of interest to middle and high school teachers.

Teaching Today

<http://teachingtoday.glencoe.com/downloads/topic/classroom-management>

Provides teaching tips, lesson plans, and more.

Classroom Management

<http://www.intime.uni.edu/model/teacher/teac3summary.html>

“Classroom Management” is a web site which clearly identifies three major fundamentals of teaching; i.e., content, conduct and covenant management.

Behavior Management Forms

<http://www.teachervision.fen.com/classroom-discipline/resource/6283.html>

Point charts, awards, certificates, behavior contracts, and more.

Tips for Helping Teachers Ease Students' First Day of School Jitters

<http://k6educators.about.com/od/classroommanagement/p/firstdayanxiety.htm>

Tips for helping anxious young students deal with their first day of school jitters and clinginess to parents.

How to Hold Regular Class Meetings

<http://k6educators.about.com/od/classroommanagement/a/communitycircles.htm>

By holding regular class meetings, you can help maintain a safe and friendly environment for your elementary school students. Class meetings can also be called Community Circle and they really help with student discipline.

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### Quiet Students Without Saying a Word

<http://k6educators.about.com/cs/classroommanageme3/a/nonverbalmethod.htm>

Quiet students mean a productive and happy classroom atmosphere. Try these simple nonverbal methods for maintaining class control.

### Classroom Rewards That Are No-Cost But Highly Effective

<http://k6educators.about.com/od/classroommanagement/a/simplerewards.htm>

Don't spend your hard-earned money buying little material rewards for your students. See how you can spend nothing and get a whole lot of great behavior in return!

### The Teacher's Guide: Classroom Management

<http://www.theteachersguide.com/ClassManagement.htm>

This web site provides the teacher with constructive information regarding all facets of discipline occurring within the classroom. Various links provide beneficial and acceptable practices in assuming and maintaining control of the classroom.

### Classroom Management: Discipline & Organization

<http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/classman.html>

This unique web site offers a variety of approaches in encouraging students to become more inventive by offering a diverse range of challenges and objectives such as pledges and fundraising projects.

### ERIC Digest

<http://www.ericdigests.org/1995-1/behavior.htm>

Major topics covered in this material include; preventing misbehavior, establishing rules, student motivation, token economy systems, decreasing undesirable behavior, punishment, individual and group management methods, and guidelines for management.

### Classroom Management Technology Tools

<http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/classroom/management.htm>

This web site has been created by the Jefferson County Schools in Dandridge, Tennessee. This URL will take the user directly to the web page about Classroom Management Technology Tools.

### ProTeacher Web Directory

<http://www.proteacher.com/030000.shtml>

The Proteacher Web Directory is a commercial Web Site with multiple topics. On this site there are multiple links with frequent updates on topics for teachers. This URL will take the user directly to the topic of Classroom Management.

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Classroom Management Article

[http://www.brains.org/classroom\\_management.htm](http://www.brains.org/classroom_management.htm)

An interesting article describing various theories of classroom management including Glasser's, Ginott's and Jones' models.

Dr. William Glasser

[http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/Glasser,\\_William](http://wik.ed.uiuc.edu/index.php/Glasser,_William)

An excellent resource with information about Dr. Glasser's ideas and how they apply in the education setting.

William Glasser Institute

<http://www.wglasser.com>

The mission of The William Glasser Institute is to teach all people choice theory and to use it as the basis for training in reality therapy, Glasser Quality Schools and lead-management.